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Message Text

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PAGE 01 AMMAN 00560 171611Z
ACTION NODS-00

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O 171334Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4711

S E C R E T AMMAN 0560

NODIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, JO, PLO, XF
SUBJECT: HUSSEIN'S NEXT STEPS

REF A) AMMAN 0432, B) SECTO 1005

SUMMARY: HUSSEIN SAID HE UNDERSTANDS OUR CONCERNS AND GIVES ASSURANCES THAT HE WILL NOT TAKE ANY ACTIONS THAT APPEAR TO BE MOVING FROM SUPPORT FOR SADAT OR MAKE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAELIS MORE DIFFICULT. HE ADDED THAT HE HAS BEEN CONTACTED BY PLO (AT THEIR INITIATIVE) AND TOLD THEM HE IS WILLING TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS. HE BELIEVES HE CAN DO THIS QUIETLY AND WITHOUT ROILING THE WATERS. IN ANY EVENT, HIS POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED AND HE WOULD BE URGING THE PLO TO GIVE MORE SUPPORT FOR SADAT AND THE PEACE PROCESS. HE HAS NO PLANS NOW TO VISIT LIBYA. END SUMMARY

1. REFTEL B) ARRIVED JUST BEFORE I WENT TO SEE CROWN PRINCE HASSAN DEPART FOR THE UK AND THE U.S. KING ALSO ATTENDED AND WE MET BRIEFLY FOLLOWING THE CROWN PRINCE'S DEPARTURE.

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2. USING YOUR TELEGRAM, I GAVE HIM A THOROUGH PARA-PHRASE OF MAJOR POINTS IN PARAGRAPHS 1, 2, AND 3.

3. KING SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE POINT YOU WERE MAKING, THAT HE HAD DECIDED ON SUNDAY BEFORE HE WAS IN TOUCH BY TELEPHONE WITH PRESIDENT SADAT NOT TO

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DO ANYTHING IN THE WAY OF TAKING AN INITIATIVE WITH
THE PLO OR VISITS IN THE AREA, AND WOULD AWAIT YOUR
REPORT WITH INTEREST.

4. TO BE SURE THERE WAS NO MISUNDERSTANDING, I
SAID WE OBVIOUSLY THOUGHT CONTACTS WITH THE PLO AT
THE PRESENT TIME WOULD MAKE JERUSALEM NEGOTIATIONS
MORE DIFFICULT AND APPEAR TO REDUCE JORDAN'S
SUPPORT FOR SADAT'S INITIATIVE. HE THEN SAID THAT
RATHER THAN HIS TAKING AN INITIATIVE, WHICH HE HAD
DECIDED FOR THE MOMENT AGAINST DOING, PLO HAD BEEN
IN TOUCH WITH HIM. THEY REQUESTED A CONVERSATION
WITH JORDAN. HE SAID HE COULD NOT REFUSE THIS
AND TOLD THEM THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE
DIALOGUE WITH THEM STARTED SOME TIME AGO. HE HAD
NOT YET HEARD BACK FROM PLO. HE WAS SURE THAT
THIS WOULD NOT CAUSE ANY PROBLEMS AND THAT HE WOULD
URGE TWO THINGS ON THEM AS HE HAD DONE WITH NABLUS
NOTABLE, HIKMAT AL-MASRI: A) PLO SUPPORT FOR SADAT
INITIATIVE, AND B) PLO ACCEPTANCE OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES
IN THE NEGOTIATING CONTEXT. MASRI IN RESPONSE HAD
GIVEN KING MANY EXCUSES. HUSSEIN NOTED HE ENDED
UP CONVERSATION BY TELLING MASRI THAT PALESTINIANS
SHOULD DISBAND PRESENT ORGANIZATIONS AND COMPLETELY
REVISE THEIR APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS.

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5. KING ASKED ME ABOUT PRESS REPORTS THAT YOU WERE
COMING HERE. DRAWING ON PARAGRAPH 4 I TOLD HIM THAT
YOU WERE SEEING ONLY THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE PRESENT
JERUSALEM NEGOTIATION, BUT WOULD KEEP IN TOUCH THROUGH
ME, ADDING THAT MESSAGE WHICH YOU PLAN TO SEND AFTER
SEEING SADAT WOULD BE A REPORT AND WOULD POINT TOWARDS
AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS ON FURTHER STEPS. I TOLD HIM
OF COURSE THAT I WAS ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
OR CONVEY IDEAS. HE LOOKED DISAPPOINTED BUT, AS
IS HIS STYLE IN SUCH MATTERS, SAID NOTHING FURTHER.

6. DURING OUR CONVERSATIONS, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT
KING IS MOST INTERESTED IN JERUSALEM AND POTENTIAL FOR
PROGRESS. HAVING BRIEFED HIM LAST WEEK ON THE AGENDA
PROBLEM, I KNOW IT SEEMED STRANGE TO HIM THAT THERE
WAS NOTHING FURTHER IN CONCRETE TERMS TO SAY ON THIS
POINT. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANY ELUCIDATION YOU
COULD OFFER ON THE SHAPE AND SCOPE ON THE AGENDA
AGREED UPON FOR ME TO PASS ON TO HIM. I RECOGNIZE
YOUR PREOCCUPATION MUST BE WITH THE MAIN ARENA. HOWEVER,
SOME CARE AND ATTENTION IN AMMAN AT THE PRESENT TIME
WILL PAY DIVIDENDS WHICH I FEEL WE MAY WELL NEED

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IN THE FUTURE.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU CAN PROVIDE ON AGENDA FOR JERUSALEM.
PICKERING

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